

DECISION POINTS AND OPTIONS FOR WEAVING EARLY LEARNING GUIDELINES INTO PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

GOAL

The workforce has the knowledge, competencies, and aptitude to support children's development and school readiness.

The foundation of a comprehensive professional development system is the knowledge base of theory and research that underlies practice, often called core knowledge. Core knowledge areas and competencies define what **all** adults who work with children need to know, understand, and be able to do to support children's development and school readiness. They provide a broad categorization of knowledge and skills that apply across **all** roles in the early/school-age care and education field. Using these categories as a framework, explicit skills and knowledge required of adults that work with specific age-groups, children with special needs, English language learners, in family child care settings, or who administer programs can be developed. Recommended qualifications for specific roles or specializations are developed from the core knowledge base with variations in the depth and breadth of content knowledge or by adding role-specific content areas. Basing all professional development activities and strategies on a consistent core of knowledge and skill areas supports a progressive, articulated, and unified system.

ESTABLISHING SCOPE

Specifications for content focus, competency development, delivery, quality assurances, access, etc., are determined by the populations served. For the professional development system and for each element and strategy employed, the following question must be addressed: Who is/are the target population(s)?

Adults who work in:

- Family child care
- Center-based programs
- Public prekindergartens
- Family, friend, and neighbor care
- Head Start
- Early Head Start
- Migrant Head Start
- Early intervention
- Early childhood special education
- Tribal settings
- Technical assistance and adult education

Adults who work with:

- Infants and toddlers
- Preschoolers
- School-age children
- Children with special needs
- English language learners
- Adult learners
- Adults in a supervisory capacity
- Curriculum development or coordinate professional development
- Parents and families

A survey or study of the early/school-age care and education workforce can provide an informed picture of the population requiring professional development. Resources on and examples of State workforce studies are detailed in the document *State Early Childhood Workforce Studies* (March 2005), by NCCIC, available on the Web at <http://nccic.org/poptopics/workforcestudy.html> and in PDF at <http://nccic.org/poptopics/workforcestudy.pdf>.

Directions: This tool is meant to serve as a discussion guide. Related resources, delineated by question number and topic, are provided in the companion document *Selected Resources for Decision Points and Options for Weaving Early Learning Guidelines into Professional Development*. As you use this tool, consider the specific needs of the populations served. Start with question 1a, below. Your answer will lead you to either the *Yes* or *No* column that provides the next direction. If you are unable to answer any of the questions, consider who/what partner can—the tool *Understanding Collaboration* (March 2005), by NCCIC, addresses engaging and collaborating with essential partners.

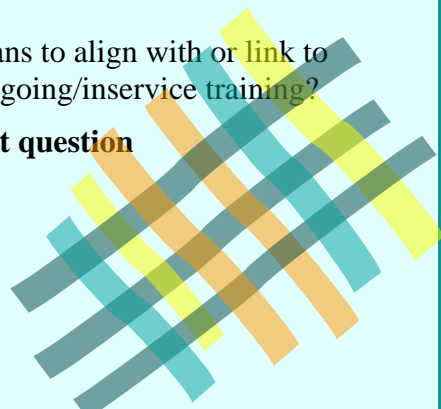
CORE KNOWLEDGE		
Decision Point	Yes	No
1a. Does your State have core knowledge areas and core competencies for early/school-age care and education professionals?	⇒Go to next question	What is used to determine content for training and courses of study? ⇒Go to 1e; substitute “core knowledge and competencies” with answer to question above.
1b. Do the core knowledge and competencies apply across all sectors?	<input type="checkbox"/> Head Start <input type="checkbox"/> Child care <input type="checkbox"/> Public schools <input type="checkbox"/> Other ⇒Go to question 2.	⇒Go to next question
1c. Are there separate core knowledge and competency documents that are used in each sector?	⇒Go to next question	What is used to determine content for training and courses of study? ⇒Go to next question; substitute “core knowledge and competencies” with answer to question above.

Decision Point	Yes	No
1d. Are the core knowledge and competencies aligned across all sectors?	⇒Go to 2.	⇒Go to next question
1e. Are there plans to align the core knowledge and competencies?	⇒Go to next question	<p>What are the benefits for each sector to align core knowledge and competencies?</p> <p>⇒Go to next question</p>
2. Do the core knowledge areas and core competencies align with the early learning guidelines?	<p>How are they aligned?</p> <p>Are the ELG domains embedded in or linked to specific core knowledge areas (e.g., child development, curriculum, environment, etc.)?</p> <p>Are there early learning guidelines for infants and toddlers? If so, are they also aligned?</p> <p>⇒Go to next question</p>	<p>Are the early learning guidelines aligned with core knowledge in any of the sectors?</p> <p>Are all the sectors being trained on the guidelines?</p> <p>⇒Go to next question</p>

QUALIFICATIONS and CREDENTIALS

Are the pieces linked in policy; is there a linked framework for training and professional development offerings?

Decision Point	Yes	No
<p>3a. Are the core knowledge areas and competencies aligned with or linked to preservice <u>requirements</u>?</p>	<p> <input type="checkbox"/> Child care licensing regulations <input type="checkbox"/> Subsidy policies <input type="checkbox"/> Public education regulations <input type="checkbox"/> Early intervention requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start/Early Head Start requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Other requirements </p> <p>How are they aligned or linked in the policies or regulations? Are there distribution and/or other related stipulations?</p> <p>Are professional development stakeholders aware of these alignments/links? How?</p> <p>⇒Go to next question</p>	<p>Has there been discussion about specifying the content of required training for directors, teachers, family child care providers, or subsidy providers?</p> <p>⇒Go to next question</p>
<p>3b. Are the core knowledge areas and competencies aligned with or linked to <u>voluntary</u> preservice qualifications?</p>	<p> <input type="checkbox"/> Quality Rating System policies <input type="checkbox"/> Accreditation <input type="checkbox"/> Career lattices/pathways <input type="checkbox"/> Other </p> <p>How are they aligned or linked in the policies or regulations? Are there distribution and/or other related stipulations?</p> <p>Are professional development stakeholders aware of these alignments/links? How?</p> <p>⇒Go to next question</p>	<p>Are there discussions about linking the core knowledge areas to systems that provide recognition or financial rewards?</p> <p>Have there been any studies of the workforce or of the system components mentioned under <i>Yes</i> column that support the need for training in specific content areas?</p> <p>⇒Go to next question</p>

Decision Point	Yes	No
<p>3c. Are the core knowledge areas and competencies aligned with or linked to <u>required</u> ongoing/inservice training?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Child care licensing regulations <input type="checkbox"/> Subsidy policies <input type="checkbox"/> Public education regulations <input type="checkbox"/> Early intervention requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start/Early Head Start requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Other requirements <p>How are they aligned or linked in the policies or regulations? Are there distribution and/or other related stipulations?</p> <p>Are professional development stakeholders aware of these alignments/links? How?</p> <p>⇒Go to next question</p>	<p>⇒Go to next question</p>
<p>3d. Are the core knowledge areas and competencies aligned with or linked to <u>voluntary</u> ongoing/inservice training?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Quality Rating System policies <input type="checkbox"/> Accreditation <input type="checkbox"/> Career lattices/pathways <input type="checkbox"/> Other <p>How are they aligned or linked in the policies or regulations? Are there distribution and/or other related stipulations?</p> <p>Are professional development stakeholders aware of these alignments/links and stipulations? How?</p> <p>⇒Go to next question</p>	<p>Are there plans to align with or link to voluntary ongoing/inservice training?</p> <p>⇒Go to next question</p> 

Decision Point	Yes	No
<p>4. Are the core knowledge areas and competencies aligned with or linked to State or National credentials offered through community-based and/or higher education?</p>	<div> <input type="checkbox"/> Infant/Toddler <input type="checkbox"/> School-age <input type="checkbox"/> Family child care <input type="checkbox"/> Director/Administrator <input type="checkbox"/> Trainer <input type="checkbox"/> Topic/target specific (e.g., literacy, children with special needs, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> National credentials (e.g., CDA, CCP)* <input type="checkbox"/> Other </div> <p>How are they aligned or linked?</p> <p>Are any or all of the credentials offered at more than one level (e.g., Level I and Level II; or Bronze, Silver, and Gold; etc.)?</p> <p>⇒Go to next question</p>	<p>Are there discussions about developing State credentials? If so, will they link to/be based on the core knowledge areas and competencies?</p> <p>⇒Go to next question</p>

*CDA credential = Child Development Associate Credential awarded by the Council for Professional Recognition
 CCP = Certified Child Care Professional Credential awarded by the National Child Care Association

Decision Point	Yes	No
<p>5a. Are the entities delivering/providing community-based training/professional development using core knowledge areas and competencies in their offerings?</p>	<p>Core knowledge and competencies are used for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Content development <input type="checkbox"/> Categorizing workshops <input type="checkbox"/> Setting expectations and objectives <input type="checkbox"/> Determining intensity/depth and breadth <input type="checkbox"/> Other <p>⇒Go to next question</p>	<p>What is used to determine training content?</p> <p>Is there any uniformity or linkages in the content?</p> <p>What entities would need to meet to discuss the possibility of having consistent content as a framework for trainings?</p> <p>⇒Go to next question</p>
<p>5b. Are the entities delivering/providing courses of study that lead to an early childhood certificate, degree, and/or certification using core knowledge areas and competencies in their offerings?</p>	<p>Core knowledge and competencies are used for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Content and curricula development <input type="checkbox"/> Categorizing courses/programs <input type="checkbox"/> Setting expectations and objectives <input type="checkbox"/> Determining intensity/depth and breadth <input type="checkbox"/> Creating a framework for degree or certificate programs <input type="checkbox"/> Other <p>⇒Go to next question</p>	<p>What is used to determine course/program content?</p> <p>Is there any uniformity or linkages in the content?</p> <p>What entities would need to meet to discuss the possibility of having consistent content as a framework for courses/programs?</p> <p>⇒Go to next question</p>

QUALITY ASSURANCE

How is the embedding or alignment in training/professional development assured?

- *For example, is there trainer and training approval; National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) accreditation; articulation agreements that assure content and/or competencies; credit for prior learning; course and/or training evaluations; etc.?*

Decision Point	Yes	No
6a. Are there mechanisms to assure that core knowledge areas and competencies are embedded in community-based training/professional development?	What are the mechanisms for trainers/deliverers?	Are there identified problems that might be addressed through quality control processes?
	What are the mechanisms for training/professional development activities? ⇨Go to next question	Are there identified problems that might be addressed through quality control processes? ⇨Go to next question
6b. Are there mechanisms to assure that core knowledge areas and competencies are embedded in courses of study that lead to an early childhood credential, certificate, degree, and/or certification?	What are the mechanisms for faculty/trainers working in: <input type="checkbox"/> Community-based settings? <input type="checkbox"/> Colleges or universities? <input type="checkbox"/> Other arenas?	Are there identified problems that might be addressed through quality control processes?
	What are the mechanisms for courses/programs leading to: <input type="checkbox"/> Credentials? <input type="checkbox"/> Certificates? <input type="checkbox"/> Early childhood degrees? <input type="checkbox"/> Certifications? ⇨Go to next question	Are there identified problems that might be addressed through quality control processes? ⇨Go to next question

PATHWAYS

Are there pathways within and across professional development offerings?

- *Do the professional development offerings lead to increased knowledge and skills in the core knowledge areas and competencies?*
- *Are there pathways created by professional development offerings that lead to increased qualifications, credentials, certifications, and degrees?*

Decision Point	Yes	No
7a. Do the community-based trainings and professional development offerings support multiple entry levels and a continuum of offerings that tie to the core knowledge and competencies?	<p>Do they also support increased knowledge and competencies in role-specific content?</p> <p>⇒Go to next question</p>	<p>Are there discussions about how to organize trainings to create pathways?</p> <p>Do practitioners/trainers express interest or frustration about moving along a career path?</p> <p>⇒Go to next question</p>
7b. Do the courses of study that lead to an early childhood credential, certificate, degree, and/or certification support multiple entry levels and a continuum of offerings that tie to the core knowledge and competencies?	<p>Do they also support increased knowledge and competencies in role-specific content?</p> <p>⇒Go to next question</p>	<p>Is there a demand for more qualified teachers because of pre-K or other State initiatives?</p> <p>⇒Go to next question</p>
8. Are there pathways across community-based trainings/professional development offerings and courses of study that lead to an early childhood credential, certificate, degree, and/or certification?	<p> <input type="checkbox"/> Articulation agreements <input type="checkbox"/> Credit for prior learning <input type="checkbox"/> Credit for credentials <input type="checkbox"/> Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for trainings <input type="checkbox"/> Modularized workshops <input type="checkbox"/> Other </p> <p>⇒Go to next question</p>	<p>Are colleges and universities, students and trainers interested in or struggling with articulation issues?</p> <p>⇒Go to next question</p>

FUNDING, ACCESS and OUTREACH

Are there infrastructure and strategies that offer supports, funding, access, and outreach for individuals and the system, and that are tied to core knowledge and competencies?

Decision Point	Yes	No
<p>9a. Are there infrastructure and strategies that offer supports for practitioners to increase their knowledge and competencies?</p>	<p> <input type="checkbox"/> Mentoring <input type="checkbox"/> Career advising/professional development planning <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership development <input type="checkbox"/> Support/peer groups or cohorts <input type="checkbox"/> Professional associations <input type="checkbox"/> Other </p> <p>Are these supports available to and utilized by all sectors and roles?</p> <p>⇒Go to next question</p>	<p>What are possible sources of supports for practitioners?</p> <p>Are there agencies or organizations that have the expertise to develop or deliver the supports?</p> <p>⇒Go to next question</p>
<p>9b. Are there infrastructure and strategies that offer supports for trainers/faculty to increase their knowledge and competencies?</p>	<p> <input type="checkbox"/> Train-the-trainer <input type="checkbox"/> Faculty development <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership development <input type="checkbox"/> Support/peer groups or cohorts <input type="checkbox"/> Professional associations <input type="checkbox"/> Other </p> <p>Are these supports available to and utilized by all adult educators?</p> <p>⇒Go to next question</p>	<p>What are possible sources of supports for trainers and faculty?</p> <p>Are there agencies or organizations that have the expertise to develop or deliver the supports?</p> <p>⇒Go to next question</p>

Decision Point	Yes	No
<p>10a. Are there infrastructure and strategies that make it <u>possible and desirable</u> for practitioners to increase their knowledge and competencies?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Quality Rating System <input type="checkbox"/> Scholarships <input type="checkbox"/> Wage incentives <input type="checkbox"/> Practitioner registries <input type="checkbox"/> Tuition reimbursements <input type="checkbox"/> Training/travel stipends <input type="checkbox"/> Substitute pools <input type="checkbox"/> Time/place/language of trainings and programs appropriate for target population(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Other <p>Are these supports available to and utilized by all sectors and roles?</p> <p>⇒Go to next question</p>	<p>Can you identify agencies or institutions that might have an interest in or the capacity to provide supports?</p>
<p>10b. Are there infrastructure and strategies that make it <u>possible and desirable</u> for faculty/trainers to increase their knowledge and competencies?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Quality Rating System <input type="checkbox"/> Scholarships <input type="checkbox"/> Wage incentives <input type="checkbox"/> Trainer registries <input type="checkbox"/> Tuition reimbursements <input type="checkbox"/> Training/travel stipends <input type="checkbox"/> Substitute pools <input type="checkbox"/> Time/place/language of trainings and programs that meet the needs of target population(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Other <p>Are these supports available to and utilized by all adult educators?</p> <p>⇒Go to next question</p>	<p>Can you identify agencies or institutions that might have an interest in or the capacity to provide these supports?</p> <p>⇒Go to next question</p>

Decision Point	Yes	No
<p>11. Are there outreach strategies that engage and inform practitioners and trainers/faculty about opportunities to increase knowledge and competencies?</p>	<p> <input type="checkbox"/> Online training calendars <input type="checkbox"/> Quality Rating System <input type="checkbox"/> Registries <input type="checkbox"/> Public engagement efforts <input type="checkbox"/> Marketing <input type="checkbox"/> Other </p> <p>⇒Go to next question</p>	<p>Are there any existing strategies or initiatives that could be used to provide outreach?</p> <p>⇒Go to next question</p>
<p>12. Is there a system to track practitioners' and trainers/faculty's progressive professional development by core knowledge areas and competencies?</p>	<p> <input type="checkbox"/> Quality Rating System <input type="checkbox"/> Practitioner/training registry <input type="checkbox"/> Trainer registry <input type="checkbox"/> System for faculty <input type="checkbox"/> Other </p> <p>⇒Go to next question</p>	<p>Which organizations already track information on practitioners, trainers, or faculty, or have the capacity to do so?</p> <p>⇒Go to next question</p>

SYSTEM-LEVEL QUALITY ASSURANCE

Are there mechanisms/measures to ensure that the trainings and professional development offerings are impacting practice and improving quality?

Decision Point	Yes	No
13a. Is evaluation of professional development activities, system components, and/or the overall system included in the State professional development plans and budget?	⇒ Go to next question	<p>Can questions be included as part of the Market Rate Survey?</p> <p>Are there other agencies and organizations with which you could partner that collect information on staff qualifications, program quality, or child outcomes?</p> <p>Are there university research departments or research organizations interested in professional development outcomes?</p> <p>⇒ Go to next question</p>
13b. Are the outcomes of professional development activities included in the descriptions of expected results in Section 5 of the State Child Care and Development Fund Plan?	<input type="checkbox"/> Earmarks <input type="checkbox"/> Set-asides <input type="checkbox"/> GS GS	<p>Are there any studies or evaluations that have explored results?</p>

Developed by the National Child Care Information Center (NCCIC) and the Child Care Bureau, in collaboration with the following Child Care Technical Assistance Network (CCTAN) partners: the Afterschool Investments Project; the Center on Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL); the National Infant and Toddler Child Care Initiative; and the Tribal Child Care Technical Assistance Center (TriTAC).

Additional information about CCTAN is available on the Child Care Bureau's Web site at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccb>.

NCCIC does not endorse any organization, publication, or resource.